

Gray (J. P.)

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ITS FREQUENCY: AND SOME OF ITS PRE-
VENTABLE CAUSES.

BY DR. JOHN P. GRAY.



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Insanity is so broad a subject, that in a single address one can hardly be expected to do more than touch upon some of its prominent features. It has seemed to me, therefore, that the most practical method in which to discuss it would be to show briefly what insanity is; the frequency of its occurrence; and to call attention to some of its causes, particularly to those which are preventable to a greater or less degree.

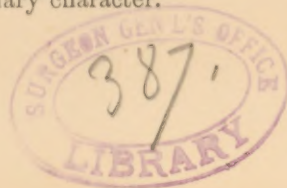
What is insanity? What do we mean when we say a person is insane? The disordered mental state, called insanity, is a symptom of disease of the brain, that is, a bodily disease; as much so as any other morbid state of the corporeal system.

The feature that distinguishes insanity from other diseases of the brain is that it is accompanied with marked and more or less prolonged disturbance of mental action. This alone makes it seem more mysterious than any other. The inexplicable relation of mind to body makes man an enigma to himself, and the greatest enigma of the universe. The poet has well described him as "the glory, jest and riddle of the world."

Man recognizes the fact that while he is utterly ignorant of the mode of union between body and mind, he cannot get along with either, alone, in the work of life, for it is in their harmonious correlation that his perfectability resides.

If the disorder of the brain which we call insanity were the only cause affecting mental operations, we might well say: "What a mystery!" The truth is, when the body, or any part of it, is "sick," in however mild a degree, the mind is more or less in sympathy. We can see this even in little children. Aching and throbbing of the head and delirium often come from disturbance of the stomach and bowels in children; the brain being in sympathy. Illusions of sight, fanciful pictures and wandering ideas are the outcome of fever. Only a little too much hot blood coursing too rapidly through the little tender brain, and we have this disturbance of mental action.

Delirium and other mental disturbances are quite common in the fevers of children, young people and adults. So under the poisonous effects of narcotics and liquors, we have very marked morbid mental manifestations. Indeed, in ordinary disturbed health, as in indigestion, dyspepsia and the like, this sympathy is so commonly recognized that people excuse themselves and are excused by others for language and conduct out of all consistency with their ordinary character.



Insanity is an extreme of this condition. As I have said, it is simply a bodily disease in which the mind is disturbed more or less profoundly, because the brain is involved in the sickness, either primarily or secondarily. The mind is not, itself, ever diseased. It is incapable of disease or of its final consequence, death. The morbid condition of the brain disturbs the mental action; the man is changed in the way of feeling, thinking and acting; an alteration in character that may be slight or profound.

This is manifested by what are commonly called delusions, hallucinations and illusions.

A delusion in a general sense is a false belief; an insane delusion implies a change in the intellectual appreciation of facts and circumstances, and is based on suppositions without foundation, and this false belief is the offspring of disease of the brain — just as delirium is the offspring of a disordered state of brain in fevers or other diseases. The one is a symptom of disease, the other a mistake as to facts or defective logic.

As an illustration of delusion and of the strong hold it has upon the mind, and the thorough change that it makes in the way of thinking, some years ago two persons came into the office within ten minutes of each other, one a woman of about forty-five, the other a young man about twenty-three. I was talking to the woman when the young man and his father came in, and the young man began to stretch his arms upward. When I asked: "What is the meaning of that?" He replied: "I am able to stretch myself and have stretched myself one hundred and fifty feet high. I can take the city of Utica on my head and pass it up into Heaven and bring it down without disturbing a brick or stone." I asked him by what power he could do this. "Why," said he, "I am Jesus Christ." Instantly the woman sprang up and exclaimed: "Then you are my son. I am the Virgin Mary," and kissed him before either his father or I could intervene. Now, here were kindred profound delusions, and an instance in which each was so profoundly insane as not to realize the extraordinary delusion of the other.

An hallucination is a delusive state of mind manifested through the senses. A man hears, sees, tastes, smells or feels what has no reality.

As an illustration of hallucinations, some years ago a young man sprang from the cars upon their arrival in Utica, ran up Genesee street screaming and hallooing, was arrested and brought directly to the asylum by the police. Coming into the office he ran directly behind my chair and called upon me to protect him. I said to him: "From what?" He replied: "From that man standing by the door with two razors in his hand. That man has followed me from Tenallytown, Maryland, and threatened to cut my throat every step. I have just escaped him by jumping from the car." Now he saw that person as clearly and distinctly in space as though it were an absolute reality.

Hallucination of the senses may come from disease of the organs

of sight, hearing, etc., but in that case the person recognizes the deception. For instance: a man recently consulted me for a most distressing hallucination of sight, the appearance of a bust of an old man with long hair, suspended in the air. He fully recognized the hallucination. At first it appeared only at infrequent intervals, but finally came so frequently as to be a great annoyance. Upon questioning him I found he had been in the late war, and was injured. When I asked him if he had ever had epilepsy, he said: "Yes, in early boyhood."

A lady of education and great refinement in Utica, some years ago, told me that she had been subject to periods of slight dizziness and faintness, occasionally but rarely falling. She had never lost consciousness, but she always in these states had a marked hallucination of sight. A long stairway opened before her, and going down that stairway a child with a red hood on her head, but she learned to sit down the moment the dizziness came on, and thus avoided falling. She called the hallucination "Red Riding Hood." The probability is that in both these cases there was a momentary unconsciousness.

Some years ago a little girl about five years of age was brought to me for examination. I conversed with the parents and the little girl for some time. Suddenly she sat down on the floor and her head swayed for a second and she looked up fully conscious. She said she knew when to sit down and not fall; "when three stars, red, blue and yellow, go past my face." The child had *petit mal*.

An illusion is a delusive state of mind manifested through the senses, but instead of being a false creation of sounds or objects of sight, a real sound or object is transformed into something else.

As illustrating illusions, a sick child with a little fever, may in an object hanging upon a chair or upon the wall — or white cloth or gown — think she sees a cat or some other animal or object. That is a deception of the senses, the transformation of one object into another.

These are the three modes of morbid mental manifestations which characterize insanity on the mental side. No matter what may be the false ideas, or on what subject, they are all brought within this narrow range — the essence is false belief; a belief in that which has no existence or a perversion of that which has existence. To illustrate — an insane man asserts and believes that his wife or his friends have turned against him, or are conspiring against him, when there is no foundation for such belief. He may at the same time interpret the words, actions and speech of anxiety and affection as meaning contempt, deception or evil will toward him.

When a man has passed into insanity he moves in a sphere quite his own. His delusive lines of thought are outside of ordinary experience, outside of his own experience. He is not governed by such rules of philosophy or logic or common sense as would ordinarily govern him, but he does not perceive this, or he perceives it very dimly. His acts spring from this unreal illusory standpoint,

and unreason becomes to him reason. His heart of human sympathies is completely altered. He no more sees himself overthrown in his reason or changed or perverted in his affections than one does who is in a profound dream. It is indeed a dream. Nothing is too illogical, too absurd, too improbable, too impossible for his belief.

“For we are not ourselves, when Nature being overcome,
Compels the mind to suffer with the body.” (KING LEAR.)

The insane man may remember and understand what he formerly *was* clearly or dimly; but he sees beyond this, and more vividly even what he seems to be in this changed state, and what he *is* to himself.

Discordant with all persons and things about him, he may give up in despair in the awful dilemma and catastrophe of life which he projects from the delusive standpoint that he occupies. In such case the person may be uneasy, depressed, unhappy or even frenzied in speech and action. Or he may take it coolly and at once begin to fortify himself in his position under the influence of his altered emotions, ideas and surroundings as he alone sees them. He may indeed exercise the same deliberateness under the influence of his false beliefs as he would in health if they related to real affairs of life. In this case he may be quiet, reticent, secretive, calm and keep his own counsel.

Another may be demonstrative, condemnatory, dictatorial, boisterous, defiant or even violent and furious in speech and action. Some are silent, listless, introverted, indifferent; the outside world being little or nothing to them. Realities have vanished and in their stead the mind revolves around a circumscribed and illusory idea. This mental change, we must appreciate, is to the insane a realized fact. The man who believes he is king, is to himself, to his own consciousness, king.

A man was brought to the asylum some years ago, and in taking the history of his case I asked him, “What is your occupation?” He answered “Raising the dead, that is my sole business.” He as much believed that was his occupation and that he did raise the dead, as he ever believed in his real occupation, that of a carpenter.

The extent and intensity of this departure from the natural habitual state marks the degree of insanity. The majority of persons recognize, more or less, in the beginning, the early alteration of character; the strange ideas coming and going; not a revery or species of dreamy speculation in which the mind is only in intellectual play, but something which while it possesses them seems a deep reality; something which leads them and which they feel powerless to resist or control. These false beliefs or delusive ideas may be pleasant, fanciful and reassuring, or they may be painful, hideous, and forbidding, according to the form of insanity developing; after a while there comes a strong flood of unnatural emotions, feelings, thoughts and purposes which come and go, and finally drive their victim into action.

Some years ago a young girl in this city appeared at the asylum about three o'clock in the morning, sent word by the watchman that she must see me instantly; declined to give her name. Said I would not know her but she must see me. I went to the office and found a young girl there of about nineteen years of age, draggled, wet and covered with mud. She had left her home to drown herself in the canal, under delusions of unworthiness, with religious depression and general unhappiness, finally culminating in the point of self-destruction, when she felt that she was no longer fit to live, and that longer life would only imperil her soul the more. She said that when she jumped into the cold water it gave her such a shock that she immediately tried to get out, and then she said she thought she would carry out the idea that she had expressed to herself a number of times, of coming to see me and asking me whether she was really the wicked creature she at times supposed she was, or whether she was insane.

At last these false ideas, apprehensions and suspicions begin to take more definite shape and are formulated into distinct delusions which govern and control them. In some cases, even after this stage has been reached, reason seems to return at intervals and they see themselves consciously as having been irrational at the one period, and rational at the other. But they see one state as real as the other.

A lawyer telegraphed me from Syracuse that he would be at the asylum at a certain hour. I was absent in the city when the telegram came, and when he called being told this, he left. Two days afterward I got a telegram from him at Albany saying he would call again at a given hour, and requesting me to have Governor Seymour and Judge Denio meet him. He came at the appointed hour and said to me, "I called yesterday to consult you because I have for some time past felt so strangely that I thought I might be out of my mind, but, I have just been to Albany and argued an important case before the Court of Appeals and feel satisfied that I do not need advice." I saw from his manner and speech that he was very insane, and said to him, "You seem to me to be very insane now." He said, "Well, perhaps, I am excited. I have been at times irrational, I know, but for the most part I am rational." Soon afterward he was brought to the asylum and declared himself to be President of the United States, and finally said that he was the ruler of the Universe. Judge Grover, of the Court of Appeals, said to me that he had heard his "argument" which was partly a fourth of July oration, and partly an attack on the courts, and that he was an insane man.

Rarely indeed at this point will efforts to reason with them change their ideas. No matter what philosophy may teach as to consciousness and recognition of surroundings, the majority of men and women in a state of insanity are inclined to believe what they see and feel and think in ordinary life. It is not strange that they

should do the same thing when insane, despite reason and reasoning. Reality of belief has been tested at the stake and on the rack, and the reality of the delusions of the insane is not only in the past, a chapter of fearful tragedies, but in the current history of the day as well.

Some years ago, a patient in the asylum complained to his daughter, who was visiting him, of neglect and disrespect shown to him as being unbearable. Her husband came to see about it, and it turned out that the insult was that the patient had declared himself to be the Saviour, and had exhibited the wound of the spear in his side to an attendant, and the attendant said it was insanity.

A lawyer once said to a brother lawyer who came to visit him in the asylum, in my presence, "Do you see that row of Masons in regalia by that fence?" "No," was the reply; "There is no one there." "Oh!" said the patient with an oath; "I suspected you were an enemy and now I know it. Don't talk to me."

A young man who heard a voice (hallucination) saying: "If thine eye offend thee pluck it out," being unable to push it out, thrust a large pin into his eye and destroyed it. A woman under a similar hallucination went deliberately to the wood pile, and in the presence of her husband and children, with a sudden blow struck off her hand. But I need not multiply instances. These illustrate the deep reality of delusions and hallucinations and the nature of the disease, the essence of which is delusion.

Fortunately, all who are insane are not unhappy, nor are the majority of them, but many are happier than in their sane state; having lost in part or in whole their true identity and the identity of other persons and their relations to them, and to things about them, a change in themselves which they no longer recognize, or which if they do they justify; they are all like persons who assume a new role of life.

I have endeavored to present a brief sketch of insanity, to bring before you the salient features or manifestations of this disease, as free as possible from technical language. As the further treatment of the subject is chiefly hygienic, intended to meet the public demand for utilizing the results of science in the practical promotion of the good health and social welfare of the community at large, I hope no apology is needed for the elementary and untechnical language employed.

FREQUENCY OF INSANITY.

As to the frequency of insanity I need say but little. Fortunately it is a rare affection when compared with other grave diseases. A physician may have a large practice, occupying all his time constantly, yet he may not have half a dozen cases of insanity among his regular patrons, or even one in a year. It is doubtful if there is one case of insanity in Utica every year to every two physicians. The single comment I would make upon this is that there should be fewer still in Utica and everywhere else over this broad land.

It may properly be asked, what classes of people become insane?

If we read the records of hospitals and of society, we find on the list lawyers, doctors, ministers, merchants and business men in every field of commerce; also farmers, laborers, mechanics, indeed men and women from every calling in life, and of all ages from twelve upwards.

The question naturally arises: "Has the vocation any thing to do with producing insanity?" The answer is, "No." Out of the proper use of an occupation insanity never comes. Occupation is rather a safeguard against it. Insanity comes to all alike, high or low, rich or poor, wise or ignorant.

CLASSIFICATION.

It assumes three fundamental forms.

Mania, manifested by delusions of excitement, expansive ideas exaggerations, self-consequence, incoherence, etc.

Melancholia, manifested by delusions of depressing character, painful ideas and apprehensions.

Dementia, representing conditions of mental failure and feebleness of mental action.

All cases of insanity come under these three heads. Cases may be acute, sub-acute, chronic, periodic, paroxysmal, but they are either mania, melancholia or dementia.

CAUSES OF INSANITY.

Causes are direct or remote and indirect.

Indirect causes of insanity are numerous, but the direct causes are few. Any thing or series of things which will impair the health, and especially which causes strain upon the nervous system, and leads to loss of sleep and rest, and to deficient nourishment, or which brings on grief or worry with neglect of ordinary and proper personal care of health, may prove a cause of insanity. The fact is, the disease comes generally in the midst of the duties of life, and in connection with wearing, wasting toil and anxieties, or if in states of idleness then it is usually conjoined with vicious indulgence and dissipation. This is true in all professions and business pursuits, among men and women who are given to labor or domestic cares.

In the actual experience of life a large proportion withstand the strain of all these causes, or at least do not become insane, but under such strain a great many go down in general health, and thus lay a foundation for insanity as well as other nervous disorders for the future. The permanent impairment of general health is likely to produce increased susceptibility to the action of ordinary causes of disease, and thus to lessen the power of resistance to these disturbing processes, and thus a certain number of cases of insanity will follow as one of the results.

In practical every-day life we know that nervous strain is often unavoidable. But if it must come then it should be rendered as harmless as possible by the use of such means as are best calculated

to break its force and cut off evil consequences; and just here, though not speaking of treatment or remedies, I will say in regard to prevention in a general way that under such circumstances we must —

First. Contemplate and recognize fully the fact of strain and appreciate the danger, and then preserve mental equilibrium as far as we can.

Second. We should seize upon all opportunities of physical rest and sleep in order to conserve strength.

Third. We should take abundant nourishment, if not from appetite, then from duty, and go daily into the air and sunlight. Unfortunately we are not apt to take the simple means of prevention which are within our immediate reach and practically in our own hands. It is because the rules of health are simple that we are not only apt to neglect them, but to pass them by without a thought

SPECIAL CAUSES.

In taking up some special causes of insanity which are prominently in the public mind, I do not intend to ignore other causes, but shall confine myself mainly to a few, which are certainly to a large degree within ordinary control. For causes, as well as preventive measures, we need not look for any hidden or mysterious influences or means difficult to discover. We have only to confine ourselves to our own homes and the associations around us and the practical common sense of every-day life in society.

I will not give emphasis to the statement that insanity is a special disease of civilization, because savages and uncivilized people show cases of insanity as well. But it is certainly fair to say that the duties and responsibilities, the toils and trials of civilization far exceed those of savage life, and they are potent factors in the causation of insanity. So of the emotions and feelings associated with civilization; they transcend those of savage and uncivilized life so far as to leave little or no basis for comparison, and they are potent factors in causation.

Says Papillon: "In the book of the heart are inscribed, day by day, and hour by hour, all the griefs and all the miseries, and all the vanities, and all the fears, and all the joys, and all the hopes of man."

In broad generalization it is necessary to take into account the differing conditions on which comparisons are made. And, besides, the assumption is, that civilization has fewer drawbacks and infinitely more comforts than savage life, and is more potent to conserve and preserve life, to say nothing of the enjoyments of social and domestic life, education, culture and Christian faith. In savage life the weak die young from neglect and exposure; in civilized life they receive more care than the strong.

Among important, impairing causes I will first speak of the influence of *tobacco* and of *stimulants* on the growth and development of youth, and on their physical and mental health.

From the sixth to the eighteenth years of life the physical, moral and mental foundations are laid. The domestic surroundings, the habits, the food, the drink, recreation, study and the social life of this period in the main make or unmake the man.

The influences which promote bodily health and growth are abundant, and are represented by wholesome food, sound sleep, regular and simple habits, cheerful temper, outdoor sports and exercises, amusements, moderate social enjoyment, and a love of home. These tend to develop bodily growth and vigor of mind, respect for authority, religious sentiment, filial obedience and self-respect, without which simplicity and harmony of character cannot be counted upon. More than this, if these are neglected the whole tendency is to lower the moral tone, lessen ambition, develop disobedience to parental authority, disregard of law, and indifference and disrespect for religion, and to breed self-conceit.

All the causes, and especially vicious habits, which interfere with bodily growth and generate unsoundness in the organism in childhood and youth, are apt to affect, also, the mental development, and when combined tend to modify and to stunt the character in its breadth as well as strength.

Are these simple truisms? Yet we cannot too earnestly and constantly bring them to our minds. In the first statement, I do not intend to suggest severity of control, privation of rational amusements, forced education and harassing religious or moral training, nor to inveigh against the tricks, the mischiefs, the squabbles and the contests of boys, whom Solomon encourages to be boys while they are boys, provided they bear in mind that they will soon have to bear the responsibilities of men.

In the second statement I refer mainly to habits and their effect upon body, mind and character. I do not intend here to include crimes. Crimes are not generally among the early things which we meet. They come as the after-fruit of misdirected or neglected youth, or they come from the criminal associations into which the young are allowed to drift, or in which they are born and reared. The use of tobacco and stimulants and lack of rational outdoor exercise in youth are potent factors in producing physical and mental degeneracy. No boy under eighteen should ever touch tobacco, and it would be better to say twenty. The habitual use of stimulants is in some respects less and in others more deleterious, and they should only be used with reference to improving health, and then only under the advice of physicians. The reason is plain. Through the period of physical growth the nervous system should not be subjected to habitual narcotism or stimulation. They both interfere with the digestive organs, and with the action of the heart. On some they act as excitants; on others as sedatives—unduly increasing or unduly lowering energy; in either case the result is evil and only evil.

A cigar, cigarette or pipe is taken by a boy to help in some way; to one it is a stimulant and a spur to work, and must therefore be

kept up. To another it is a quieting sedative, and it makes him feel easy and as though he could get along somehow, so he keeps it up, and gradually it dulls ambition, abates energy and reconciles him to a lower place as a student and a worker.

I have seen these effects on boys of my own acquaintance, and I have watched them from boyhood to manhood. Many a bright boy at twelve is dull and mediocre at eighteen. He has betrayed the legitimate prospects of youth by tobacco, and possibly by beer, and by the habits they are apt to induce, and will sit through life half way up the ladder instead of at the top. I would ask the boys and young men of these days: Is it nothing to miss the higher chances of sound, vigorous manhood? Nothing to be stunted bodily and mentally, and be less than what you might be? To be old before your time?

But is this always the result of such habits? No. There are those who grow and develop into strong, vigorous manhood, physically and mentally, in spite of the effects of such habits. Do I believe these indulgences ever benefit these persons? By no means. All that can be said is that their systems tolerated both tobacco and liquor. However, I know young men who were wise enough to stop or modify the narcotism and stimulation, finding for themselves that it was injurious, though tolerated. There is a proportion of youth who are at the best not strong, but to them such indulgences are simply more dangerous.

As an instance of toleration of poison, I recently saw a young person who was taking three grains of arsenic a day, as the result of habit, and the system not only tolerated, but demanded it. This is an amount taken daily sufficient to destroy life.

But you inwardly ask: "What has this to do with insanity?" Much. It tends to impair and disorder physical growth and the development of activity throughout the organism, but especially in the brain and nervous system, thus laying a deceptive and defective foundation for healthful life, and at the same time rendering the organism more susceptible to the influences which originate and develop the morbid processes which we call disease. Among the diseases thus invited are such nervous disorders as neuralgia, St. Vitus' dance, general debility, arrested development in various organs as shown in headaches, lassitude, defective digestion, and finally, in many, permanently lowered mental power. In cases where insanity comes on it is usually later, and rather as a consequence of the habits which have weakened the constitution.

I have said rational out-door exercise. I mean walking, riding, out-door games, and the gymnasium, boating, hunting, fishing, securing in such exercise pure air and sunlight. To be rational each of these should be taken in its season and in amount not to interfere with regular systematic study, or systematic occupation, which are to fit them for life and usefulness.

Now what would be the opposite conditions? Idle lounging, indulgence in smoking or tipping, or both, or habitual billiard play-

ing, often conjoining tobacco, and trenching on the hours of study and sleep. Such persons, instead of using the exercise of billiards simply in inclement weather, or as an exercise, are too apt to make it an habitual indoor dissipation, flattering themselves that as it gives grace and exercise to the muscular system, so it must be useful. The same may be said of the latest and possibly one of the best indoor exercises — roller skating. I approve of this exercise, but it needs to be guarded in its use certainly more than it is now. The principal dangers are excess and overstrain, and physical injuries consequent upon the latter. By excess, I mean too frequent indulgence and too long continued. By overstrain, I mean efforts at speed. This induces overwork both upon the heart and lungs, and if kept up for a considerable time cannot but do harm to children. It is turning a useful, graceful and agreeable exercise into a toil, under the stimulation of rivalry. This abuse of this exercise is, when contrasted with proper moderate speed, what horse-racing would be to the quiet and healthful speed of ordinary riding. I am speaking of children and youths in reference to these matters, and not of adults and their special exhibitions of skill.

The important fact I wish to impress is that in the developing period the tissues are soft and elastic, but liable to strain, and no good can come from violent exercise in any form. On the other hand, in the inclemency and cold of winter, as an exercise, after the close of school hours, I have no doubt that roller-skating, under proper restrictions, is beneficial.

OVERSTUDY AND MENTAL STRAIN AS CAUSES.

Now, a word as to schools, study and school hours. A good deal has been said in regard to over pressure in study and long hours of school, etc., affecting the bodily and mental health of children. It is common to charge the school-house and overstudy with headaches, with the dullness, and the nervousness, from which many children suffer who are going to school. I doubt very much whether overstudy has so much to do with them. In too many instances overstudy is the scapegoat for the baleful influence of bad habits in boys and girls, or of poor food, or of neglect of food and insufficient clothing.

It is true children do get sick at school, have headaches, bleeding at the nose and lassitude, and in some instances these are due to over pressure in study, but in a large number it is due to bad air in the school-room and in their own homes, and to the neglect of children by parents in regard to their eating, by hurrying them through meals and paying but little attention to the quantity they take, or neglecting to see that they get the necessary hours of sleep.

No child under twelve should have less than nine hours of sleep. "Again, children or youths at school or at work, who are attacked with acute diseases, should not be returned to school or to the workshop until after complete convalescence; and especially in cases of

fever, measles and diphtheria, and all cases where the nervous symptoms have been more or less pronounced.

"It is too common to allow such children to go back to school or to work as soon as they are fairly able to be about. But the brain, particularly after such disturbance of circulation and nutrition, needs rest more than ever. I have seen great evil flow from neglect of this course in many cases. For such children being unable to study and recuperate at the same time, the general health is consequently lowered, an anæmic state becomes persistent, chorea and hysteria often follow, and the physical development is impeded."

Study is certainly healthful, after ten or twelve years of age. It is such systematic brain exercise as promotes growth, strength and stability, physical and mental. It is true that all children are not able to endure the same amount of study, either as to hours or extent of lesson or class studies. An iron-bound system demanding the same of all would be an unwise system, and fail in its results.

Schools are often failures on this account, even when the teachers are competent, honest and devoted to the interest of the scholars. Parents are often to blame. They desire that their children shall have such and such studies, and take such and such a course. The result too often is that the child fails either in health or mental energy or both, and gets at best less real education and culture than if originally left to the current of his own personality and natural ability. Youths of equal original ability differ in the power of acquiring, some taking but two hours to learn what others would demand double the time for.

I have frequently been consulted in regard to backward boys. Some years ago a professor in one of our colleges wrote me in regard to his son, and on my suggestion brought him to see me. Careful examination showed him as one of the overpressed cases, a healthy young fellow of good ability, growing rapidly, pushed into higher studies than he could comprehend, but conscientious and ambitious and determined to succeed. His brain was so overwheeled that he appeared demented. Regulation of study, and entering a class further back, soon put him on the right plane, and he accomplished an education with sound physical and mental development.

I have referred to study as healthful *after* ten or twelve years. Previous to that period, the great majority of children are incapable of enduring what might be called study. It is too common a mistake to put children, under this age, to studies that require too much intellectual effort, or which exercise intellect exclusively without reference to memory. The reasoning powers are not properly developed until long after the memory is fresh and active enough to lay in a good stock of knowledge. The earlier studies, therefore, should be such as principally exercise the memory and furnish the materials upon which the reason may afterward exercise itself, and of which reason and judgment will afterward discover the meaning and appreciate the value and necessity. Such studies are spelling and reading, or geography, history and grammar with the mere rudi-

ments of arithmetic. Bringing in a study out of its place in an ascending scale, or the attempt to crowd a child into a subject beyond its years, often arrests the proper mental growth, confuses mental conceptions and produces what we sometimes call *obfuscation* or cloudiness of mental faculties.

During the past year a report on the London public schools was made by Dr. Crichton Browne, a distinguished alienist, and one of Her Majesty's Visitors in Chancery. Dr. Browne claimed from his investigations that the headaches, giddiness, faintness and sleepless nights and other disabilities were due to over-pressure, too high standard in proportion to age, too many hours in school, detention after school hours and studying at home. It appears from investigation of one of the schools examined and referred to by Dr. Browne that forty per cent. of the children went to school sometimes without breakfast, and twenty-eight per cent. in the afternoon without dinner. That there should be sleeplessness or headache and inability to study under such a system of half starving, one could well imagine.

EDUCATION AND MENTAL WORK.

What, then, is the influence of education and mental work? Are they promoters of physical vigor and mental soundness and safeguards against insanity or the opposite?

To the first part of the question it is only necessary to answer that the systematic training of a physical organ is not only promotive of its vigor, but necessary for its highest development. This is a physiological law, and the brain is no exception to it.

Further, and as an outcome of this, such exercise and training of the great nervous center, the brain, confers larger power of endurance in the legitimate every day work of life for which it is constantly called upon, and greater power of resistance to morbid influences, as well as greater recuperative energy when attacked by disease. The man thus trained can endure more strain, physical and mental, lose more sleep, act in emergencies on less food than he who is not. Beyond the advantages referred to, education gives to the individual greater power, both intellectual and moral, and is a great safeguard against unbalance of mind.

Education, even in a narrow sense, or that which is obtained in the lower grades of the common schools, is useful against many of the troubles of life, adds to the power of securing comfort and livelihood, and takes away some of the roughness and wearing asperities of human nature. Even this gives increased power of perception of real or seeming evils, and of reasoning and self-control in meeting and overcoming them. In a broader sense, embracing still higher study and culture, it is certainly one of the greatest, if not the greatest, safeguard against insanity. It enables men to understand and appreciate causes, physical and mental, to see through and meet difficulties and maintain self poise in emergencies, the lack of which so readily overthrows the ignorant. Fear, superstition, the

ignorance of nature and of human nature lie at the bottom or foundation of delusive ideas in the ignorant, both sane and insane. They misunderstand, misinterpret and misapply things which are entirely simple to the educated.

I am not here referring to the few who represent learning in its very highest walks, but to the great body of educated men and women in professions, in business, carrying on the affairs of the domestic, social and political fabric of society, and the educational, benevolent and religious work of the world.

Education must have some meaning to make it successful to youth. When it passes the bounds of common schools intended to furnish the rudimentary instruction necessary to fit boys and girls for the ordinary vocations of life, it must then take into account the bent of mind and purpose of further education in each case and the ability for acquiring. There are some to whom study is a pleasure and the acquisition of the highest education a dream of ambition. To these should be given all possible opportunities. There are others to whom the classics are a stumbling block and philosophy incomprehensible, while history, mathematics, and other branches are easily acquired. There are others again who are unable to master the higher mathematics or retain in their minds the principles involved and the application of rules on leaving the class-room, where they recite mainly from memory, and then painfully and imperfectly.

It is manifest that confusion of mind and defective education must result from attempts to compel uniform studies for all in order to secure uniform class training. The further result is, dislike of study as a whole, and more or less indifference even to those branches for which they are competent. Classification of studies to secure the best mental balance must relate rather to the natural competency and mental qualifications of students than to fixed courses of study, which are usually made the necessary qualifications for a diploma.

We are certainly justified in saying that experience and the facts of history, as well as the laws of physiology, point to mental culture and activity of mind and brain as beneficial; that they conduce to health of brain and mental balance. As I have already said, the use of the brain is favorable to its growth in early life, and conduces to its stability in maturity. This is equally true of all parts of the organism. The processes of nutrition and assimilation are more active under systematic work, whether labor or study, than in idleness and irregularity of life.

Education and culture are indeed strong defenses against disease, insanity included. The ratio of insanity among intellectual men and women is far less than the proportion found among the general population. When insanity does come on in connection with prolonged mental action and excitement, as in heated political contests, civil and military governments, or in the times of great commercial or financial activity, whether amid prosperity or depression, it will be found that among the prominent actors and leaders there are few who give way. If they do, it is not because of mental activity or

enthusiasm, but because of over hours of work, stealing time from sleep, and the general neglect or disregard of the ordinary rules of hygiene essential to the physical health. When men forget that their bodies are vital structures and not machines, and ignore the fact that nature requires stated periods of cessation of activity, both physical and mental, for the recuperation of the wasted energies in the organism, from the expenditure of force of any grade of activity, they must pay the penalty. Such men may, indeed, occasionally put nature to her utmost strain, and come out safe, and at the same time quite disregard all vital laws. But this cannot be persisted in or done often as too many find out to their cost when too late.

I am only here referring to limitations and the effect of mental work, not to concomitant, accidental and unnecessary depressing causes or conditions, the result of ignorance or recklessness. I say mental here, instead of intellectual, because the latter is generally applied in a limited sense. There is often broader and more exacting expenditure of mental power in mercantile, financial and other large business affairs than in any form of study. The scholar marks his higher work by intensity and sustained attention, but associated with very little general waste or attrition with others. It is rare that such work in itself, however constant and intense, does mischief. Unaccompanied by emotional excitement and antagonisms, mental effort raises its own limitations, for when the brain is wearied the work can no longer be successfully continued. Of course, if when the brain is wearied, having reached its limit, the scholar chooses to stimulate it, either by tobacco, narcotics or stimulants, he can get more out of himself, but when he begins this process he brings in new factors, which if kept up may result in physical deterioration, ultimately lowered mental power or unbalance of mind. When emotional excitement and antagonisms are associated with high mental activity or worry, the wear and danger are far greater, since these make more strain on the whole nervous system, and require more work of the heart and lungs.

I would, therefore, insist upon this fact: that it is not to the intellectual work that we look for disaster and breaking down or unbalance of mind, but to quite another field — that of physical overstrain and exposure. For instance, a man may attend protracted religious meetings, or he may enter an excited political campaign, or he may be called by the financial, commercial or manufacturing interests into unusual mental effort, and work night and day and neglect regular sleep and food while keeping up prolonged mental and emotional strain, and finally break down, although at the same time he may be taking great pains to guard himself against exposure to the elements. Is it to be wondered at that sometimes such men lose mental balance?

Others again may keep up the mental and emotional strain, secure the necessary food and sleep, but be indifferent to the elements, take cold and have diseases of the lungs and kidneys, or rheumatism, and through these affect the overstrained nervous system, and thus lose mental balance.

Religion or religious fervor does not cause unbalance of mind any more than politics or political fervor. Insanity in such cases could not be charged to religion, or to politics, but to overwork and imprudence. It would not be religious or political insanity any more than rheumatism or pneumonia would be religious or political. These latter are a thousand times more frequent in association with religious or political work than insanity.

I speak of these because they are among the common ways of exhausting the nervous energies and producing disease; because they are all preventable by the individual if he understands and obeys the ordinary laws of health.

It is sometimes asserted that the wonderful activity and push of business in this country, the inordinate struggle for wealth, the restless spirit of speculation pervading all classes, produce physical deterioration and decay, and a ratio of insanity beyond that of other countries. The facts on which such an assertion is based are not forthcoming. It rests on theory, on the idea that high mental action must produce such results. The necessary comforts and even luxuries of life are so abundant and so accessible in this country, that with few exceptions the physical needs of man are easily secured and health thus maintained. If any man should look over this city of Utica, of such large activity and business energy, I think he would answer the question for himself.

What is the practical lesson as to preventive measures in this field of professional and business energy? He who gives himself to work which requires high mental activity on whatever subject or under whatever circumstances or strain, if he obeys the ordinary laws of health in eating, sleeping and protection from the elements is almost wholly without danger. This applies as well to the excitement, or the mental strain in sickness, in grief and all the sorrowful and anxious attendants of illness and loss by death. These are certainly prolific sources of mental depression and unbalance as well as of marked insanity, and the rule enunciated is the safeguard and the only remedy.

SUICIDE AND INSANITY.

The frequency of suicides is a painful fact of the present time. The question is whether they are due to insanity or not. They are largely due, in my opinion, to a lowered sense of honor and personal responsibility, and loose views in regard to the future life. On this subject there seems to be too little knowledge or reflection, or a strange indifference. It is rare that a daily paper does not chronicle one or more suicides, but a comment is rarely made. I some time ago read of six in a morning paper. The column had a sensational heading, but no comment.

Some think we only in this *imitate* the ancients, among whom suicide was reputable and legal. Any one comparing the sublime reflections of Cicero on this subject with the loose talk of to-day can

not fail to see the vast difference between what a man proposes to do or justifies himself in doing when he deems it pleasing to the gods, and what he does and justifies as pleasing to himself and in disregard of conscience. Associated with education and culture we must have not only morals, but religious sentiment, without which there is no sure foundation for the dignity of man or personal responsibility. If man is only a beast that perisheth, when life is unsatisfactory in its present and its prospect, he may as well end it.

Into an age of pagan philosophy was introduced, by a divine teacher, a higher code, which, while neither questioning nor condemning art, literature, statesmanship or military prowess, proclaimed the doctrine of a personal responsibility to a Creator under laws of justice and morality, declaring that man was not only responsible to his Creator, but to the State and community for his character and conduct, the loyalty of virtue and obedience to the powers that be, "to render unto Caesar the things that were Caesar's." Responsible, also, for his fellow-man, to "love his neighbor as himself;" and further that there was a life beyond this, open not to the few alone, but to all, conditioned on the manner in which this life was spent.

From that hour the world's history, the aspirations of man, have been higher and nobler. Nineteen hundred years have rolled away and that code has stood the test of time and the mutations of the world. It has survived creeds and philosophies and religions of paganism and barbarism, and it stands to-day as the embodiment of all that is sacred in society, religion and civil liberty.

We, in this age, as the inheritors of the good and the wisdom of all ages, are not the degenerate sons to condemn divine philosophy, or put any thing contemptible or degrading in its place, or instead of that religion which teaches the sublime truths of peace, righteousness and good will to man, to intrude disbelief, skepticism or egotistical idolatry of self into our systems of education.

John Adams in a letter to Jefferson in explanation of the expression, "Natural Aristocracy," said: "The grounds of it were virtue and talents." Purity of character and purpose, and the power of influencing others in the right, was true nobility. With regard to life he asserted that a month without appetite or food would destroy the existing generation, and no future generation would exist, and added: "Thus the exalted dignity of human nature would be annihilated and lost, and in my opinion the whole loss would be of no more importance than putting out a candle, quenching a torch, or crushing a fire-fly, *if in this world only we have hope.*"

An old Scotch poet, Waugh, puts into the lips of a Scotchman smoking his pipe this bit of philosophy:

"If mon had been made for a bit of a spree
An' th' world were a marlockin' schoo
Wi' naught, nobbut heytin' an' drinkin' an' glee
An' haliday gam to go thro';
He'd sicken afore
His frolic were o'er,
An' feel he'd bin born for a foo'."

RELIGION.

Is it ever a cause of insanity?

Religion, strange to say, is sometimes set down as a cause of insanity, and we have the expression "Religious Insanity," as a current idea. To some it means that a person is insane on the subject of religion; to others that the insanity was caused by religion. What people talk about when they become insane has rarely any thing to do with the real cause of the disease. In all ages of the world, the systems of faith and doctrine of the time respecting man's spiritual being, has been the comfort and solace of the loftiest minds in the contemplation of the ills of this life, as well as those of the unlearned.

Religion can in no sense be charged with producing insanity. Suppose a person attends a religious meeting day after day, and night after night, and finally becomes insane? It is true that insanity, in some instances, though rarely, follows after such attendance and the consequent excitement and mental strain. As I have said at another point, so do rheumatism, colds and pneumonia.

In such instances it is the exposure and neglect of food, loss of sleep, excessive physical activity without rest, which break down the general health and induce various diseases, insanity included. I know that the history of the world shows that sometimes a whole neighborhood gets into a state of excitement, and the madness seems to be universal. This is not insanity, but fanatical and hysterical excitement; it is no more true madness than the excitement gradually wrought up on political questions, until at length we have the fury, rage and brutality of a mob, and the fearful tragedies of nihilism and revolutionary violence.

Mere feelings and emotions or the madness of passion are not disease, nor of themselves the producers of disease.

Some years ago a woman was brought to the asylum in a state of profound melancholy, her mind dwelling wholly on spiritual subjects. She had resorted to fasting and prayer in the delusive expectation that her only child, who had died, might be brought to life. She had before this given herself up to grief and indifference to duty; had got away from her home and spent whole nights kneeling on the grave of this child. Was it strange that her health should at last give way, and that she should sink into mental derangement?

Many years ago a young minister preached two sermons every Sunday, superintended a Sabbath school, held two or three meetings a week in his church, wrote for the religious press, visited as pastor the members of a large congregation, limited his food, and trenched by study upon the hours of sleep. He finally failed in health and passed into acute mania, raving only on the subject of religion; lost his own identity; declared himself Zerubbabel; that he was appointed of God to preach "to the spirits in prison;" that he had descended into hell, and there had preached the gospel of salvation and redemption. This was not Religious Insanity, but insanity from exhaustion, religion having nothing to do with it except to give tone and character to his delusions. He recovered and spent a long and

useful life as a conservative minister of the Gospel. A distinguished lawyer, whose labors and privations broke him down in health, passed into profound melancholia, declared that he had ruined his family and that his soul was lost.

Would you charge this to religion, to law, or to exhaustion?

The only comment to be made upon such cases is, that they should not occur. They are all plainly within the scope of preventive measures. No such neglect and abuse of simple laws of health are justified, certainly not at this day. There are men and women all around us, in this city, and perhaps in this audience, who have stood at the furthest verge of mental unbalance; depressed in spirits, every thing about them clouded, suicidal thoughts coming and going, but who, being assured that impaired health was at the bottom of their misery, were willing to submit themselves to enforced eating, quiet and rest, and necessary medication in hope of restoration, and who could testify that when health was regained their delusive ideas vanished "as a dream when one awaketh."

A vast concourse of cases press upon my mind, but I forbear to detail them, only wishing to impress by sufficient illustrations the truth that insanity is only a bodily sickness which disturbs mental action, and that, taken in its inception, it is very amenable to treatment; that insanity is born only of ill-health. Like fire that a pail of water may quench in the beginning, but neglected may defy all means, so it is with this disease, but with this difference in its favor, that every man and woman has within reach the means of timely avoidance or prevention.

INTEMPERANCE AND DISSIPATION.

Man is asked, and perhaps not unreasonably, to rise superior to his surroundings, his appetites and passions, and bring himself into obedience to the laws of nature within him; to direct his appetites and passions in their natural course, and under such restraint as will lead to usefulness, happiness and the elevation and progress of the race. Philosophy teaches as much as this. Even in savage life he is aided in the struggle for existence by laws of custom maintained for mutual and general safety, giving some scope for mental culture and the development of moral being. How much more under Christian civilization which maintains unity of interest and mutual help. But, if he had only himself to look after, and the means about him were wholly under his control, he might accept philosophy.

Nature, indeed, sets before him an example of unswerving obedience to law, but man sees that the individual plant in its life is interfered with by accident, and by its surroundings, marring and often destroying, not only its growth and symmetry, but its existence. The majestic oak falls before the sweeping tornado or is riven by lightning, or its life may be gradually and insidiously sapped by so small a power as an insect, or worm, or it may be wounded by the thoughtless or ruthless stroke of an ax, and under the action of the

elements disease may set in, and from such starting point compass its death. We see that while it is true that nature is everywhere in obedience to immutable law, there is also an apparent, if not real, incessant strife for individual existence. The man to whom the life of the oak is of sufficient consequence, either for his gratification or his use, may guard it from the ravages of the insect, the worm, or the ax, but not from the force of warring elements.

So man may guard himself from the moth of idleness and indifference, from the evil sway of consuming appetites and passions and the corroding cares of life, and in a measure from the ruthless and envious assaults of malice, and may secure himself amid the inclemency of the elements about him, but he stands exposed among his fellows as the oak is exposed to the elements of nature, and in incessant strife for individual existence.

But it is not the great calamities of life which men have most to fear, or which do the work in breaking down men and women, but the persistent gnawing of cares, the strain of the legitimate duties of life, and the causes I have heretofore referred to — the indulgence of consuming vices which pamper the appetites and passions, and thus sap the vital energies and dethrone self-respect, and engender disease.

Intemperance — I only have time here to refer to one of the forms of dissipation — intemperance. The legitimate use of alcohol, in its various forms, must be recognized by all medical men having experience. And it is not too much to say that its misuse as an intoxicant is as thoroughly understood and condemned by them as it can be by any class of persons. Nor do I feel called upon on this occasion to discuss the radical question of its total disuse because of the liability to abuse.

While intemperance does not show a large percentage among the direct causes of insanity, yet indirectly it must be considered as a prominent cause of mental unbalance, especially in its influence in breaking down the general health and producing paralyses, apoplexies and paresis, as well as by its pauperizing power, bringing families into conditions of neglect, starvation, over-toil and exposure, and in this direction it certainly is a fearful cause.

Intemperance seems to be the opprobrium of civilization. Strange to say, the strong and brilliant seem often to go down faster and more surely under the influence of dissipating habits and vices, especially drinking, than the dull and mediocre. Indulgence with them is full of zest and enjoyment, despite the remonstrances of conscience which is always condemning them. To them giving way seems in most instances death in life; only the beginning of a tragic end to come sooner or later. To many of the most highly gifted there often seems to be a strange, fatal fascination in the unnatural excitement of dissipation in drink, which carries them on with little or no resistance. Once the cup drained to the dregs, and all reasoning and warning seems unavailing; a thousand ghostly forms of friends who had perished under the same evil spell might appeal to them but in

vain. Nothing is too absurd, nothing too degrading, nothing too base and foolish in this line of conduct. To them drink is the lute of Orpheus,

“ Whose golden touch could soften steel and stones,
Make tigers tame, and huge leviathans
Forsake unsounded deeps to dance on sands.”

Here we have the greatest and most piteous wrecks of mind. Not a few, but always a vast procession. The steady, constant drinker is gradually poisoned, it is true, if he takes a quantity which the system is unable to dispose of, but at the same time the system itself becomes tolerant of the poison. I recently saw a young woman who took seven grains of morphia a day, and a man who took twenty grains a day, either amount greater than would be required to destroy human life in the beginning. Neither of these persons was comfortable without the drug. A gentleman once told me that he had become so addicted to drink that he could not do with less than half a pint of whiskey before breakfast and from a pint to a quart between that and the following morning. With this amount he was undoubtedly under the influence of alcohol, but he was not what would be called perceptibly intoxicated.

The regular heavy drinkers are not apt to become insane, but they are more liable to the development of other diseases, especially of the liver, kidneys and lungs, and to apoplexies and paralyses, in consequence of degeneration of the arteries. If to more or less steady drinking an occasional debauch is added, insanity is likely to occur. But apoplexy or suicide is quite as likely, the latter a too common end of such a life. Suicide does not generally occur in the midst of an excess of drinking but at the close, when they “see themselves as others see them.” Shame and remorse are possible then, because they are able to contrast a past with the present.

I have already referred to the influence of drinking on the young. In them its deleterious influences are not confined to the body, but go further, and induce weakening of the mind and moral degradation. Youth under the influence of stimulants are in an unnatural state which prevents them from thinking and perceiving things truly, and they drift on, perhaps often unconsciously, into follies of thought and action, into idleness, indifference, selfishness, disregard of truth, and finally into dishonesty and loss of all self-respect.

A vast number of young men with the best opportunities and possibilities in themselves for honorable lives of usefulness are thus wrecked long before reaching full manhood. A proportion of them break down and die of lung disease, largely from exposures, while others lose mental tone and wholesome ambition, others become weak-minded and finally demented, and others again fall into criminal modes of life. Unfortunately, the young do not seem to realize that self-control is a high essential to influence and character, and that it grows only under exercise and experience. They are first betrayed by self-confidence, and then allured by the physical pleas-

ure and the *abandon* which intoxicants give into deeper and deeper paths, and thus, as I have said, at last sink into dishonor and are lost to truth, virtue, decency, filial respect and regard for the rights of others.

My observation is that the moral degradation is more apt to take place where drunkenness commences in youth than in those who become intemperate later in life. In the latter the character has become developed, and the ideas of right and wrong are formed before they have come under the delusive influences of semi-intoxication.

It is a sad reflection that out of a hundred young men who go out into the world full of promise, yet unmindful of what dissipation is under the power of appetite, and flatter themselves that they can keep up indulgence and hold themselves within reasonable and safe bounds, fifty fall in the early skirmishes of life before its battles really begin. I do not care to think how small the number is of this class who reach full life with the appetite under successful control. Happy for these if before reaching the last stage they are fortunate in finding death.

It is said "offenses must come," and men are too often inclined to take this as an excuse for shortcomings and defects, and think that after all they are only one among the multitude. Effort, indeed, is too often a failure, because the individual himself has only vague ideas of what he is undertaking to conquer in himself, and still less knowledge of the essential external influences he has to contend with. He starts to overcome with his will the deeper influence of appetite imbedded in his nature. His real weakness he either did not appreciate or he palliates it. His appetite may not have the consent of his will. His determination and will may be against it. What then becomes his weakness? The answer will have been in part anticipated: temptation. Nine chances to one he will construe the only remedy for temptation to mean: "Keep liquor away from me and keep me away from liquor." This is essential, but it is only a part, and a very small part when the will is relied on as the main safeguard. He must put his personality in the scales on his own side.

A man who abandons himself is inevitably lost. When he begins to listen to pity and to pity himself, he not only becomes pusillanimous, but a helpless and hopeless drift-wood in the current of appetite. If he would accomplish any thing for himself he must, in his sober moments, rise to the dignity of asserting: I am still a man and will be my own master.

Leaving out for the present the moral considerations, what is the greater safety against drinking? It surely must be in the surroundings, socially, the conditions of bodily comfort which preclude any pressing sense of the need of stimulants. I heard a laboring man say some time ago that a quart of skimmed milk with his dinner, when away at work, soon brought him where he did not feel the want of beer. I am satisfied that the want of a proper beverage is one of the most controlling adverse influences with those who are honestly

anxious to avoid or overcome the appetite for strong drink. *Feed the natural appetite and provide for the needs of the body, and thus secure the power of preventing the feeling of the need of stimulants.*

Occupation, too, is another prime safeguard. This begets the need of nourishment and food, and helps do away with the feeling of the need of stimulants. Some years ago I was told by a sugar refiner, that the use of oatmeal water or thin porridge saved a great many of the men from intemperance. The men working in such a temperature required fluid, and a large amount of water disturbed digestion, and beer was too often resorted to. The oatmeal water happily came in as a healthful substitute. I was told by a lady in Scotland that thin oatmeal gruel or oatmeal water given to her laborers gradually displaced the beer which they thought they could not get along without.

MATERNITY.

There is one important subject connected with causation which perhaps directly or indirectly produces more insanity than any other — insanity connected with maternity and with the over-toil, the loss of sleep, the neglect and defective nourishment after child-birth.

Experience teaches us that of all forms of insanity, that form which abruptly converts what ought under normal conditions of personal hygiene to be a time of exceeding joyousness into one of infinite sorrow is the most distressing to all concerned. Death itself is oftentimes less terrible to the grief-stricken family. I am persuaded that there is scarcely any department of preventive medicine in which prophylaxis is so deplorably neglected as in the care and treatment of this class.

On the 14th day of January, 1885, two mothers were brought to the asylum together. One had five children, the youngest three months old. The other had one child eight years of age. The first was a case of mania, the second was a case of melancholia. Both lost mental balance within a few weeks after the birth of the child.

The first was incoherent, laughed to herself, expressed no interest or anxiety in her children, wandered from one subject to another, but when her attention was held and she was questioned, she was able to answer, and between herself and her husband her history was obtained. She was an active, vigorous, energetic little woman; had done her own housework, was strong and healthy at the birth of her other children as well as at the birth of the last. She got up after two weeks, and began to do her work. The four children were taken with whooping-cough, and finally the baby also. This kept her awake, up often at night, and then for six weeks she was deprived largely of sleep, was anxious, worked constantly, took little food, because, as she said, she "did not feel like eating, and felt weak and trembling." She knew she was sick, and felt that she ought not to do so much, had headache, heart pain, faintness — all warnings of nature, but kept on. One day she felt a strange feeling

about her heart and in her head ; then a wandering of the mind ; and from that time lost self-direction and passed into insanity. She was pale, wasted in flesh, seemed like a person half dazed and in a waking dream, but insisted she was not sick.

The other was in good health at the birth of her child, and the boy, a fine, healthy little fellow, was with her. She got up within three weeks to do her housework, nursed and took care of the baby, and ran down in the same way as the other, but by slower stages, and sank into depression and unhappiness, with periods of melancholia, more or less severe, and after the long struggle of eight years passed into profound melancholia with unhappy delusions and a desire to get out of this life. Had motherhood necessarily any thing to do with the insanity in these cases ? No. The history of both shows that it came from readily preventable conditions. Almost a crime against nature.

These are not exceptional cases, but too common. We make laws to protect animals against abuse and negligence and ignorance, and it is humane to make them and to enforce them. In all the range of human affairs there is no neglect, no wrong, no cruelty, that compares with the neglect and ignorance associated with motherhood. A woman about to become a mother stands in the most sacred relation human life presents. Neglect is so common that it passes current. It may be said to be expected.

The facts of experience show that this neglect and ignorance constitute a direct cause of insanity in a large number of cases, and in a vast many more an indirect cause by first breaking down the general health. In these ways motherhood is made wrongfully to become a prolific cause of insanity ; of mania, of melancholia, of suicide ; yes, of homicide. What a wrong ! A wrong that cries to Heaven day by day, but seemingly in vain.

There is a subject kindred to this of which, in this relation, I ought to speak. Passing from motherhood we come to a too current sentiment productive of infinite evil. I mean the sentiment which leads men and women to try to believe that home can be a place of more comfort, and life happier, without children. The effect of such a hideous sentiment on life and society is appalling. For women there can be no more fatal error than to yield to the temptation to enter upon so unholy a compact. I look back through the pages of experience written, yes, burned into my mind, and see the long list of insane proceeding directly and indirectly from this cause. I sometimes question if even the evils of intemperance are greater than those to which I now refer. It is true that the sweetest, loveliest, most prudent and care-taking women sometimes become insane. Yes ; but this is the occasional accident of life.

The greater number, and among them such cases as I have mentioned, sink into unbalance of mind, under the too great burden of life's duties with those of maternity.

What have we to contend with to avert such an evil ? We have ignorance and indigence to contend with, and against these to initiate

a system of preventive measures, to instruct and aid the ignorant and poor.

Physicians recognize this, and among the opulent and well-to-do it is not difficult to secure proper care. Among the indigent and poor, with whom life is at best a struggle, this cannot always be accomplished without aid.

First as to ignorance. If women really knew better, a large number would save themselves more than they do, and if men had an intelligent appreciation of these matters, their wives would be better off.

There must be few men that are fit to be called husbands, who, if they understood, would not only acquiesce and aid in the instructions of the physician as far as possible, but make any personal sacrifices in addition, to shield their wives from undue labor under any circumstances, and especially under such and with such a possible outcome.

Some time ago a man of very moderate means brought his wife to me for examination and medical advice. She was quite broken down in health. After going over the case carefully I said: "After all, the most important things are good food and rest; and without these every thing else is of doubtful value. Your wife should have absolute rest for at least three months." She said quickly: "I don't see how this can be done, for we are not able to hire help." Said the husband: "Yes we will do it. I will make myself able. I will sell one of the cows, and I will work harder myself. This was the spirit of a man worthy the name of husband, and he *did* make himself able.

I do not feel it necessary to expatiate upon this subject, as the facts are too patent. Is there a remedy for the better protection of maternity? I have long had in my mind the idea of an association for this work — I will not say charity. It is no more a charity than the organization of a church is charity. One is an organized association for the instruction and aid of people in their religious duties, the other would be simply an organized association for instruction and aid in maternal duties. In two instances I have endeavored to enlist men with large means who were contemplating benevolent disposition of their fortunes, but I did not succeed, though I have always believed that I should have succeeded in one case if death had not come suddenly and unexpectedly. In my conversation with this gentleman one of his questions I remember was: "Would it not require a great many nurses?" No; I would simply suggest the employment of suitable women of the same social class to do the housework and be paid for it by an association; such an association, under the notice of a physician in all cases, to furnish such aid. It would not be a public, but a private and unpretentious, mode of work. If women knew they would have all needed care — not in a hospital with its necessary publicity and separation from home, but in their own homes and among their families, and without the notoriety of their condition, what a burden would

be lifted, what health saved, and what insanity prevented. What a long list of mothers with the sad history of neglect and toil and abuse come before me. Yes, driven into madness under the very shadow of the church. I have looked into hundreds of pale and haggard faces and in my heart I have said a thousand times : "What victims of inhumanity."

I have said that ignorance, indigence and poverty would have to be met, because they are, among such conditions as I have referred to, the remote causes of insanity.

If it were thoroughly known and understood that nature demanded and needed time for restoration, and what the dangers from neglect were, and that needed assistance was always at hand and tendered by a responsible association, it would be hailed with favor and the work would save a large number of mothers from broken health, and cut off the real source of insanity in a vast many more. I would lay down this proposition : For at least a month after child-birth no woman should be subject to toil, or worry or anxiety, and surely not to want of food and care. The history of asylums and hospitals shows the sad train of evils and sorrows which come from such neglect and from the other point to which I have alluded, and so conspicuously, that the subject ought to command the attention and practical co-operation of the benevolent and thoughtful people of all classes. If I could whisper in the ears of every young man in this house : "It is your mother who is silently suffering," would any one turn a deaf ear? No. If he did he would be unworthy the name of man. It is a mother. Somebody's mother. Oh, men and women shall we leave such a wrong unrighted?

You may think, on this occasion, perhaps, I ought not to have brought this subject before you. I have done so because, as I have said in the outset, it is one of the commonest causes of insanity, and one which is as largely preventable as any other. Besides I have heard the wail of sorrow come up from too many households of neglected mothers to keep silent. I have looked into the meaningless eyes of too many mothers lost by such neglect to stay my voice. Certainly there could be no more meritorious association, no higher recognition of the dignity of woman. Let us do this work and be spared the pain and the worry of such cases as I have related. Let us accept it in the catalogue of unquestioned duties; not of charity, but of human impulse, emanating from a sense of common duty to humanity. Let us see in these our mother and our sister.

"I was an hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me."

So that on the great day of Assize, when we ask, when saw we the Prince of Life hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and ministered unto him, we shall hear those wondrous words of approval:

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

